sound corresponding to the sounds sensed by the microphones, etc. (Again, the information need not have been collected by a "celebrity"; it may have been collected by any person, but the word "celebrity" will continue to be used to indicate the person whose stimuli are being recorded.) Thus, a person may be able to experience the stimuli experienced by a President Elect being sworn in, or by a famous scientist and winning the Nobel Prize, or by a talented actress and winning a prestigious award, etc.

[0030] Further, the images and sounds sensed by the sensors on the celebrity may be altered by a processor implementing animating software, such that practically any series of events may believably be created by the virtual reality generating device. In other words, the sensed images and sounds may be used as a backdrop or background, and may also or alternatively be used as a template for animation by the virtual reality. For example, assume that the celebrity, at some point during the recorded time period, had a conversation with a particular person. The face image and the voice features of the person may be overlaid or superimposed on top of a generic animated figure in the virtual reality, and the animated figure controlled or animated according to any instruction implemented by the software, user, or programmer. For example, perhaps the celebrity had a conversation with President Jacques Chirac of France, who during the course of the conversation stated, "We do not support those dirty, American capitalists." The animation software may then, in response to an instruction by a programmer, digitally extract the image of Chirac's face and body and superimpose it onto a controllable animated figure, and extract the sound of Chirac's voice and superimpose it onto a controllable sound animation. The processor and software finally create an animation of Chirac pointing to his waist and exclaiming, "I am wearing pink underwear."

[0031] Thus, using intelligent animating software, a personalized virtual reality may be generated for a user, based at least in part on the information sensed by the sensors carried by the celebrity. In other words, a user may experience the recorded time period of the celebrity's life, or may experience an animated and fictitious (and perhaps more entertaining) version of the celebrity's life. Further, the virtual reality may be interactive, so that the events experienced by the user in the virtual reality depend on choices made, words stated, or actions performed by the user. For example, the user may have an interactive conversation with a virtual person, where the words and movements of the virtual person are generated and animated on the fly, in response to the words and actions of the user. Of course, the animation may be programmed from scratch by intelligent programmers, and may not be based at all on a time period of a person's life recorded by cameras, sensors, etc. Preferably, however, the virtual reality experienced by the user, animated or not, has the appearance of reality, preferably not the appearance of cartoon animations.

[0032] Of course, not only may a user experience a time period of another's life, he may, if he is willing to record a time period of his own life using attached video cameras and microphones, etc., re-experience a time period of his own life. More importantly, because these images and sounds may be used to create a fictitious animated set of events which may or may not be interactive with the user, the user may use the virtual reality to "redo" something that he failed at the first time, or to act in a past experience in a way that he normally would not act. For example, a man is trying to impress a woman so that she will go out with him, but he ends up saying something offensive or embarrassing, or he otherwise fails. Had he been recording the event, he could then transfer the information to the virtual reality generating device, and be able to retry the effort. Of course, the virtual woman, who is in fact animated, may be programmed to be particularly receptive to the man's advances, or may be programmed to a realistic and believable level of receptiveness, etc. Thus, the man may use the virtual reality to release stress or increase confidence by programming the virtual woman to be impressed by him, no matter what he says. Alternatively or in addition, he may use the virtual reality to practice his social methods by programming the virtual woman to respond in more realistic ways. In other words, the virtual reality is controllable so that its interactive aspects (e.g., the relationship between cause and effect) may be adjusted to be more or less believable and realistic.

[0033] As another example—and of course there are millions of possible scenarios in which a user would want to "redo" or re-experience a past event in an interactive virtual reality environment—a person has been mistreated by her boss. In real life, she may have absorbed his nasty words and condemnation without retaliation, to prevent from being fired or to prevent further unpleasant confrontations. However, if she had recorded the time period, she may transfer this information to the virtual reality generating device and interact with her virtual boss in the virtual reality environment in a manner that is more cathartic and stress-relieving than in real life. She may, for example, tell her boss off, or she may punch him, or she may act particularly silly (i.e., a manner in which she would normally not act), such as crossing her eyes and walking away. The virtual reality may be programmed such that the virtual boss acts in a way that he realistically would act in such a scenario, or it may be programmed so that the virtual boss acts unrealistically, such as particularly submissive, apologetic, or otherwise pathetic. Thus, in the virtual reality environment, a user's fear of acting in a particular manner or doing a particular thing or task may be eliminated or assuaged.

[0034] Having described the virtual reality generating device, the plot according to a preferred embodiment will now be further described. At first, the unhappy protagonist Nick may be happy to enter the virtual reality environment in some of many available predetermined scenarios (such as driving in a race car or winning a professional boxing match) or as some of many available predetermined celebrity personalities, as discussed previously, to relieve stress by experiencing unique experiences and/or those of another person. The virtual reality stress management program may be owned and operated by a very kind, intelligent, cynical, funny (but at times very serious) man who both operates the program and counsels the participants in relieving their stress. His name may be Mr. Hodges, he may be an older gentleman, and he may appear at some point in each of the virtual reality experiences or "apparitions" to talk through the virtual reality session with the participant and to help the participant make the most of the experience. Thus, he may serve as an advisor and, particularly to Nick, a friend. (Of course, this character is not necessary to the plot, and may be eliminated, or may be a lesser character, and/or may act or do things differently than suggested.) After Nick has had several interesting virtual reality experiences, Mr. Hodges suggests that he try a more personal (and thus more emo-